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The Hook Up

Home Agent — County Agent — Extension Editor

A ROUND-ROBIN CIRCUIT LINKING FARM & HOME BROADCASTERS

Issued by the Radio Service of the Office of Information in cooperation with the Visual Instruction and Editorial Section of the Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

Vol. 1 October 1936 No. 7

THE RURAL LISTENER SPEAKS

By Russell Lehe, Purdue University

It has been pretty much of a guess knowing how to serve the widespread audience of farm radio listeners. So about a year ago, some of us connected with the agricultural news service at Purdue University decided it would be a good idea to conduct a State-wide survey to determine the desires of Indiana farm listeners regarding farm radio service. We sent out 1840 questionnaires, every county in the State being represented. Half went to farm women and half to farm men. More than 50 per cent responded.

They gave us their opinion as to the type of information they wanted most, and an idea of the kind of entertainment they liked best. From the standpoint of information, the women mentioned recipes, advice on cooking, baking, interior decorating, gardening, poultry raising, information on rearing children, book reviews, and general news. The men wanted market reports, farm news, information on livestock and crops, cooperatives, farm organizations, farm outlook, and farm legislation.

(Continued on page 2)

THE RURAL LISTENER SPEAKS

(Continued from page 1)

As to entertainment, the more than 900 listeners rated the various types which we suggested as follows:

Farm Women:	Farm Men:
Variety, first	Variety, first
Music, second	Music, second
Drama, third	Comedy, third
Comedy, fourth	Drama, fourth

They rated the different kinds of music in the following way:

Farm Women:	Farm Men:
Old time songs, first	Old time songs, first
Religious music, second	Popular music, second
Popular music, third	Religious music, third
Band music, fourth	Band music, fourth
Negro spirituals, fifth	Hill-Billy music, fifth
Hill-Billy music, sixth	Negro spirituals, sixth
Marches, seventh	Marches, seventh
Symphonic music, eighth	Symphonic music, eighth
Opera music, ninth	Opera music, ninth

Sources of Information

They told us, too, what they considered to be the best source of farm programs. The rating is the farm listeners' preference of a group of sources which were suggested on the questionnaire. The results show:

Farm Women:
- Actual homemakers' experience, first
- U. S. Department of Agriculture, second
- Experiment stations, third

Farm Men:
- Actual farm experience, first
- Experiment Stations, second
- U. S. Department of Agriculture, third

(Continued on page 3)

THE RURAL LISTENER SPEAKS

(Continued from page 2)

How to Present Farm Programs

One of the most interesting things indicated was the methods of presentation which appealed most to farm listeners. They expressed their desires as to the form of presentation, whom they preferred to give the farm program, and whether or not they wanted some kind of entertainment to accompany it. Here is the way they rated the different forms of presentation:

Farm Women:	Farm Men:
Dramatization, first	Individual talk, first
Individual talk, second	Dialogue, second
Dialogue, third	Dramatization, third

Their preferences as to who should give the farm program:

Farm Women:	Farm Men:
Homemaker specialists, first	Agricultural specialists, first
Farm women or groups of farm women, second	Farmers or groups of farmers, second
Home demonstration agents, third	County agent, third
Professional radio staff members, fourth	Professional radio staff members, fourth

Ninety per cent of the women and 69 per cent of the men were in favor of some kind of entertainment accompanying the farm program.

When and How Much They Listen

Our survey also gave information on the average number of hours farm people listen per day during the various seasons of the year, and the hours during the day that they listen most. The results obtained on the average number of hours listened per day by seasons:

Farm Women:		Farm Men:
5.95 hours	Winter	3.71 hours
3.90 hours	Spring	2.26 hours
2.71 hours	Summer	1.61 hours
5.35 hours	Fall	2.43 hours

(Continued on page 4)

THE RURAL LISTENER SPEAKS

(Continued from page 3)

The relative popularity of the hours during the day, which farm people listen is expressed in percentages of the total number of people replying for each hour. Their listening habits are:

Hours	Farm Women	Farm Men
5- 6	10%	20%
6- 7	34%	37%
7- 8	38%	28%
8- 9	38%	13%
9-10	35%	7%
10-11	25%	6%
11-12	21%	11%
12- 1	13%	45%
1- 2	21%	20%
2- 3	55%	11%
3- 4	45%	10%
4- 5	14%	6%
5- 6	22%	17%
6- 7	63%	60%
7- 8	78%	83%
8- 9	68%	65%
9-10	38%	35%
10-11	7%	9%
11-12	1%	3%

Summary of Comments
on Farm Broadcasting

Space was left on the questionnaire for a general comment if the person replying wanted to contribute more information than we had specifically asked for. Here is a gist of the comments made by those questioned:

1. Listeners want programs given by people who are authorities on the subject, and who have had actual experience.

2. They want their information short and to the point, and presented with a limited amount of "sugar coating".

3. But they also want, usually, something else -- agricultural programs need something to attract the listener: music, comedy, or drama.

4. Many listeners suggest farm programs be broadcast at times when they can better listen to them.

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WHY NOT "VISIT" BY RADIO?

By C. R. Briggs

Have you ever felt ashamed that you had not accepted an invitation of some farmer and his wife to come out and see them?.....

Well, I have too. Sure, I know some were invitations with a purpose.....

The idea of invitations with a purpose makes me wonder sometimes. Supposing a farmer invited us to talk over the radio? He probably never thought of it. He extended the best invitation he knew how -- to trade his open hearted hospitality and the soothing feeling of yellow legged chicken for a chance to talk to you.....

When you've talked over the radio you've come as close as you ever could to accepting some of these fine invitations.....

You don't see? Suppose we put it this way, as one of my friends did. "I'll meet you every Monday noon at my radio and keep up on what is going on. I can do that easily without interfering with my work.".....

Sure, if there were 500 farmers who would meet you Monday noon you'd be on hand and have something to tell them that would be worth listening to.....

Your friends don't know quite how to extend an invitation to come radio-visiting; but it wouldn't be out of the way for them to do this new thing, would it? We ask them to do new things.....

(Mr. Briggs, for 11 years a county agent and until recently farm program director for Station KOAC, is now regional information specialist, Soil Conservation Service, with headquarters in Spokane, Wash.)

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Please send contributions to Alan Dailey, Radio Extension Specialist, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

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